

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0007] with the following paragraph.

[0007] The fastening means used in the protective case comprises a female-male threaded fastener. The female connector is a nut that is enclosed in a bubble on the rear panel and. The male connector is a post that has three sections: a threaded shaft, a support shaft, and a head. The threaded shaft threads into the nut and the support shaft, now extending from the rear panel, is slidably insertable into a groove on a belt clip, such that the head is captured behind the groove. It is a key feature of the protective case according to the invention that the post is easily removable from the protective case by simply unscrewing it. Thus, if the user opts not to use a belt clip, the post does not present a nuisance protrusion that is a source of injury, or that can catch on clothing, and scratch or mar surfaces.

Please replace paragraph [0009] with the following paragraph.

[0009] In order to facilitate easy removal of the post from the shell, a concave curved slot is provided in the head, thus enabling the user to fasten/unfasten the post with the use of a coin. The post must attach firmly to the case, in order to reliably support the case with the handheld device in it from the belt clip. A washer is provided that secures the post to the case. ~~fits on the end of the post, the outer surface of the shell is visually attractive.~~

Please replace paragraph [0017] with the following paragraph.

[0017] **FIGS. 1—2** **1 and 2** illustrate a protective case **100** according to the invention. **FIG. 1** shows the protective case **100** suspended from a belt clip **B**. The

protective case **100** comprises a shell **101** and a removable fastening means **104**. The shell **101** includes a rear panel **103**, a front panel **111** and a hinge **109**. The rear panel **103** has an outer surface **103A** and an inner surface **103B**. The fastening means **104** comprises a female connector **105**, a male connector **107** and a washer **108**. The female connector is hereinafter referred to as a "nut" and the male connector as a "post." The post **104** includes a threaded shaft **107C**, a support shaft **107A** and head **107B**. A concave area or recess **102**, with a convex area or corresponding bubble **113**, is formed in the rear panel **103**. The bubble **113** is a smooth, raised contour on the outer surface **103A** ~~103A1~~. A through-bore **110** is provided through the center of the bubble **113**, as shown in **FIG. 2**. The shell **101** is preferably constructed of a rigid material such a metal or a form-rigid synthetic or rubber material, although other materials, such as leather, may also be suitable.

Please replace paragraph [0018] with the following paragraph.

[0018] **FIG. 2** is a cross-sectional drawing drawings that shows the post **104** ready for insertion into the nut **105** that is assembled in the recess **102**. The nut **105** is dimensioned such that, when placed in the recess **102**, the upper surface is substantially aligned with the plane of the inner surface **103B**. The recess **102** is shaped to correspond to the shape of the nut **105**, to prevent the nut from rotating in the recess **102**. Thus, if the nut is square, the recess is a square recess; if the nut is triangular, the recess is triangular. The shaft **107C** of the post **107** may then be threaded through the washer **108** and the hole **110** and into the nut **105**. The washer **108** is permanently affixed to the post **107** directly below the support shaft **107A** around the threaded shaft **107C** so that it cannot be lost. The washer **108** serves to secure the post **107** to the bubble **113** when tightened and also to protect the outer surface **103A** from being scratched or other marred by the post **107**. Preferably, the washer **108** is a composite construction with have a soft layer **108B** that faces the outer surface **103A**,

~~103A~~ and provides greater friction force against ~~against~~ the shell 101, and prevents surface damage to the shell 101, and with a hard layer 108A that faces the support shaft 107A and provides the strength and rigidity to secure the post 107 to the shell 101. Suitable materials for the soft layer 108B include but are in no way limited to nylon, leather, and felt. The circumferential side of the head 107B has a knurled or embossed surface that facilitates gripping and turning. Cut across the top surface of the head 107B is a slot 107D, shown with dashed lines in FIG. 2, to enable the use of a coin to tighten/untighten the post 104. The slot 107D is convexly curved, to increase surface contact between the head 107B and the coin.